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A

SERMON

Preached at St. *Mary's*

Before His GRACE

The Duke of *Newcaſtle*

THE

CHANCELLOR,

AND THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

On Commencement Sunday

July 2. 1749.

By *JOHN GREEN*, D.D.

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY,

AND

FELLOW OF S. JOHN's COLLEGE.

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M.DCC.XLIX.

TO HIS GRACE

The Duke of *Newcaſtle.*

My LORD,

I Humbly beg leave to inſcribe this plain diſcourſe to your Grace, which was made public in obedience to your commands, and which you were pleaſed to ſpeak of in a manner agreable to your Grace's great candour and politeneſs.

I was willing to ſhew, my Lord, on an occaſion, annually ſet apart for the grateful remembrance of our Founders and Benefactors,

that their bounty reached farther than the particulars on whom it immediately fell, and was, as it was intended to be, of public and national advantage. It was owing, I am ſatiſfied, to your Grace's having the ſame ſentiments of our inſtitution, that you have lately done our Univerſity the ſignal honour of taking it under your protection as our Chancellor. For whatever has a near connexion with and is greatly ſerviceable to the common good, will be ſure of having a diſtinguiſhed place in your Grace's favour.

We ſhould be unworthy, my Lord, of thoſe high marks of your regard, which your Grace has been pleaſed to ſhew us, were we not deſirous of anſwering to the utmoſt of our power the great and beneficial ends of our foundation: we cannot, I am perſuaded, expreſs

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in a more acceptable manner thoſe returns of duty we owe to your Grace for repeated inſtances of your kindneſs to us, than by a diligent and careful endeavour to anſwer thoſe ends: and we have the greateſt encouragement to expect from that nearer relation to your Grace, in which we have now the honour to be placed, that we ſhall on no occaſion want the aſſiſtance of your great experience and wiſdom, or the ſupport of your authority in enabling us to accompliſh the deſign we aim at; that of diſcharging with credit and ſucceſs the important province of education, of cultivating the principles of religion, learning and loyalty in our youth, and making ourſelves, by a conſtant attention to the duties of our ſtation, a uſeful part of the community.

That

DEDICATION.

That Providence may long continue to us, what we have ſuch abundant reaſon to value, your Grace's protection, is univerſally the earneſt wiſh and prayer of your Univerſity; and in particular, my Lord, of

Your Grace's moſt dutiful

and obedient Servant,

S[t] John's
July 20. 1749.

JOHN GREEN.

1 JOH. iv. 21.

This commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother alſo.

THE love of God is repreſented in the goſpel as the vital and animating principle of all true Religion; as of the higheſt value and dignity in its nature, as well as the moſt vigorous and extenſive in its influence; as affording us the firmeſt ſupport in diſcharging all the offices of piety and devotion we owe to the ſupreme Being, and as in ſome degree connected with and favourable to the duties of charity and benevolence, which we owe to our brethren.

It were to be wiſhed, that a principle of ſuch apparent and eſſential uſe in directing our enquiries on the ſubject of religious obedience, and the moſt likely to render that obedience compleat, had been clearly and univerſally underſtood; had not been either miſapprehended through error, or perverted by deſign. But it has not happened as was much to be hoped, as in ſome meaſure might have been expected. This ſource of religious and ſocial duty has been much diſturbed and corrupted; debaſed by impure and adulterate mixtures of human policy and hurtful ſuperſtition. A pretended love of

the Deity has occaſioned as much wrong practice, and given riſe to as many abſurd performances, as the ſlaviſh fear of him.

One of the cleareſt ways of ſeperating the injunctions of God from the inventions of Men is by viewing them in the effects they are fitted to produce, and the influence they naturally have upon general good. For if the moſt probable cauſe of his creating us was his own free and unmerited benevolence, the unconſtrained diſpoſition of his own mind to communicate happineſs; and if virtue appears by the original conſtitution of things to be the common and appointed means of promoting that happineſs; nothing certainly can have the ſanction of his authority, or make any part of our ſervice to him, that interferes with either of theſe; that is deſtructive of virtuous practice, or detrimental to the general intereſts of Society.

Many have run, I think, into oppoſite and dangerous extremes, by not attending enough to this conſideration. The Moraliſt, terrified by the dreadful effects of ſuperſtition, and the hideous form under which ſhe has been uſed to appear to his imagination, has ſometimes left all worſhip and affectionate regard to the Deity out of his catalogue of duties; while the Religioniſt, in the earneſtneſs of his application to God and the uſe of thoſe means, he judged the moſt proper to recommend himſelf effectually to his favour, has been as apt to overlook the

the intereſts and happineſs of his fellow-creatures. I will proceed then to examine,

I. What is meant by theſe two affections, the love of God and our brother, and to explane the connexion that is here made between them.

II. I would thence take occaſion to conſider how well this connexion was underſtood by our Founders and Benefactors, who erected and endowed theſe places of education; ſet apart for the ſtudy and exerciſe of true religion, the cultivation and improvement of uſeful knowledge.

As the relation we ſtand in to God is a ſtronger foundation of certain duties we owe him, than the relation we bear to any other Being; ſo his nature and perfections are the moſt proper and natural, and indeed the only adequate objects of our affection. A right apprehenſion of theſe therefore will be more effectual to engage our eſteem and approbation, than the ſurvey of any inferiour and imperfect natures, of any of the ſcattered excellencies that appear in his works. Is our regard excited by ſuch noble and exalted qualities, as raiſe and dignify a character among men; and can we fail to entertain the utmoſt veneration for that Being, who is endowed with infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and equity? Do we deſire to gain the eſteem and confi-

dence of thoſe, of whoſe integrity and good intentions towards us we are diſpoſed to think well; and muſt we not be more deſirous of recommending ourſelves to his impartial favour, and of being approved by his unerring judgment? are we touched with a grateful ſenſe of human bounty; and muſt not our hearts overflow with joy and gratitude at the thoughts of him, who has made ſuch a bountiful proviſion for our happineſs, who is the gracious author of our being and all the bleſſings that attend it; who is the fountain of every good that we either poſſeſs or have in proſpect? do we feel, can we help feeling a profound reſpect for the inventors of ſuch uſeful arts and inſtitutions, as have greatly contributed to the improvement or better accommodation of life? do we preſerve a lively and affectionate regard for the memory of thoſe friends and benefactors of human kind, who have exerted themſelves with unwearied zeal and activity for the good of others, of as many as came within the limited ſphere of their influence; and muſt we not have the ſame ſenſation, and in a greater degree, for a character more moral and perfect, more compleatly and univerſally good? for him, whoſe enlarged and diffuſive bounty extends to all ranks of being, and takes in the whole compaſs of his creation? who *openeth his hand* in the regular and ordinary communications of his providence, and by a liberal ſupply

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of all the various means of happineſs *filleth all things living with plenty.*

Though he falls not under the immediate notice of our ſenſes, whoſe impreſſions are uſually the moſt deep and affecting; though they can only diſcern him in the outward traces and effects of his goodneſs; yet as our reaſon can ſatisfy us of his preſence, and help us to an imperfect diſcovery of his nature; ſuch a diſcovery is capable of inſpiring us with the moſt raiſed and exalted ſentiments of love and reverence; as due reflections on the benefits, we have derived from him, muſt be ſufficient to challenge from us the ſincereſt returns of gratitude. And moſt reaſonable it is, that this affectionate regard ſhould be properly cultivated and ſuitably expreſſed; that the memory of common bleſſings ſhould be kept up among men by their publickly joining together in religious worſhip; and that the private mercies, received by each particular, ſhould be acknowledged by him with devout thankfulneſs of heart, and a juſt ſenſe of his own dependance.

But then as the divine honour or happineſs are not any ways affected by any act of homage that man can pay, or any ſervice he can render to his maker; it is to cultivate and improve a right diſpoſition in himſelf, that theſe expreſſions of duty and regard are expected from him. And the ſincerity of this regard to our

maker

maker ſeems beſt to diſcover itſelf by our doing thoſe inſtances of good to his creatures, which his all-ſufficiency makes us incapable of doing to himſelf; is moſt truly ſhewn by a ſteady zeal to coöperate with him in the great deſigns of his providence, and promote the glorious ends of his government; the advancement of true virtue, and the furtherance of univerſal happineſs.

This is the love of God (as our Apoſtle expreſſes himſelf in another place *) *that we keep his commandments:* all other tokens we can give of our affection to him may be the dictates of ſelf-love or vanity, may proceed from a mean or a miſtaken principle. But his profeſſions muſt be ſincere, who out of a ſteadfaſt conviction of the wiſdom and equity of the divine adminiſtration, conducts himſelf with a regular ſubmiſſion to his laws, and an uniform fidelity in his ſervice; who out of a juſt and affecting ſenſe of his paternal care and ſovereign authority conforms all his actions to his will; who ſtruck with the excellency of his moral character ſets it always before him as the moſt worthy object of his love, and, as far as the imperfection of his nature will allow, the moſt proper pattern for his imitation.

This conſtant ſenſe of God's perfections and habitual conſciouſneſs of his preſence, as they are fitted to raiſe in us thoſe affections, which will naturally expreſs themſelves in all proper acts of piety towards him; ſo they tend

* 1 John 5. 3.

tend alſo to improve in us that humane temper, which will as naturally produce the genuine fruits of benevolence towards our neighbour. For as this good principle is beſt acquired by copying the imitable qualities of the divine nature, ſo it is exerted in an univerſal obedience to the laws of his moral government. It conſiſts in obſerving in our behaviour to thoſe, with whom we have any concern or connection, the rules of juſtice, peace, and truth, which they have a right to expect from us, and which are abſolutely neceſſary to the being of ſociety; and in doing them ſuch friendly and charitable offices, as they cannot indeed claim of right, but which are equally neceſſary to its well-being. It is as comprehenſive therefore in the ſeveral ways wherein it may be exerted, as there is good to be rejoiced at, or evil to be lamented; it implies a ſatisfaction in the happineſs, which others enjoy, and ſome degree of ſenſibility for the afflictions they endure. It diſpoſes every one, as far as his abilities reach, to contribute towards the improvement of the one, or the removal of the other.

Love therefore is very juſtly placed as the chief ſupport of all ſocial duty; as it has doubtleſs the greateſt efficacy in keeping up among men a chearful and uniform ſubmiſſion to the ſeveral parts of it. Without this habitual and governing principle a conſtant regard would hardly be paid to thoſe great and fundamental laws, by which every community is upheld; much leſs would

would that mutual exchange of good offices be kept up, which adds ſo much to the real happineſs of ſociety; much leſs would men be willing to ſhew thoſe peculiar acts of goodneſs to others, which cannot ſo much be claimed from their juſtice, as expected from their humanity.

The love of God and of our brother are affections then of the ſame nature, as they are both vigorous and active qualities, that reſt not in the will only, but ſhew themſelves in real and ſenſible effects: the one is not duly expreſſed by fruitleſs wiſhes for the welfare of others, but by ſuch actual help and ſervice, as it is in our power to beſtow; the other is not perfected by a pretended eſteem for the perfections of the Divine Nature, but by a conſtant and unfeigned obſervance of his laws.

They are likewiſe inſeperably connected, as they both contribute to advance the ſame end; as they uniformly conſpire to carry on the ſame gracious ſcheme and purpoſe of his providential government. *Our goodneſs extendeth not to God*; none of our ſervices can any other way reach or affect Him, than as by diſcharging well that ſubordinate part he has aſſigned us to act, we in ſome meaſure concur with Him in the execution of his deſigns; we do what our imperfect ſtate will permit us to do, towards forwarding ſuch ends, as he is pleaſed to approve, and to repreſent as the objects

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of his care and concern. Such are, that thoſe laws and and that authority be maintained, which he has eſtabliſhed for the government of the moral world; that that order and diſcipline be preſerved, whoſe good effects are ſo eaſily ſeen in leſſer ſocieties and combinations of men, but which equally tend to the general uſe and benefit of the whole community of mankind: that *all things work together for good to them that love him*; as all things will finally do, and as they would do in this ſtate, were not their natural tendency hindered, and their regular effects defeated.

I would here take notice of one remarkable inſtance of wrong conduct, which the miſtaken principle of divine love has carryed men into. Some of a recluſe diſpoſition have thought, that the beſt way of manifeſting their love to God was by a fanciful abſtraction from the world; by living here in a kind of ſeparate ſtate from the reſt of mankind. This has been ſometimes done, we may ſuppoſe, with a ſincere view; ſometimes with the pretence only of attaining to greater heights of ſpiritual improvement; as more leiſure was hereby to be had for religious exerciſes; and the mind, neither drawn off by buſineſs nor diſſipated by pleaſure, might have the opportunity of a more eaſy and open intercourſe with heaven. This paſſion has been greatly recommended and encouraged by that communion, which has peculiar arts of turning godlineſs to gain,

and has modeled the plain rules of the Goſpel into a ſcheme of power and a ſyſtem of policy. But though ſeaſons of retirement, ſet apart for offices of devotion and a ſerious review of a man's own conduct, are enjoined us, and are highly reaſonable in themſelves; yet I know not that the wholly-ſequeſtered and devotional life, (cryed up by the church of Rome as a ſtate of the greateſt piety and perfection) has the leaſt foundation in ſcripture or reaſon. *The author and finiſher of our faith*, who *left us an example*, that, as far as the difference of our condition would allow, *we ſhould follow his ſteps*, was chiefly employed in the duties of humanity, and in acts of a beneficial nature; *he went about doing good*, making uſe of the extraordinary powers he was poſſeſſed of, to remove the uſual hindrances and obſtructions to human happineſs. The rules he has given for the direction of his followers require them to make the various ~~attem~~ments of providence ſubſervient to the ends, for which they were intended; and to employ the talents committed to their truſt, whether they be the gifts of nature, the advantages of birth, or the acquiſitions of induſtry, in promoting the honour of God, and the welfare of men. The manifold wants indeed, with which we are encompaſſed, as they are only to be ſupplyed by the mutual exchange and communication of good offices among each other, manifeſtly point out the

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the expediency, or rather ſhew us the neceſſity of ſuch a friendly intercourſe.

Conformable to theſe ſentiments ſeems to have been the deſign of thoſe, who founded and endowed theſe ſeats of learning, ſet apart for the moſt uſeful and valuable ends, the ſtudy and exerciſe of true religion, the cultivation and improvement of real knowledge. They were perſuaded of the inſeparable connexion that ſhould ever ſubſiſt between theſe two affections, *the love of God and our brother*. Agreeably to this perſuaſion were theſe ſocieties formed, which ſhould give at once a laſting teſtimony of their piety and bounty, and ſtand as monuments of their zeal to forward the great ends of our religion, the real purpoſe of all true religion, *the giving glory to God and ſhewing good-will towards men.*

Their principal deſign was to carry on, by the united induſtry and endeavours of many, the neceſſary buſineſs of education; to train up the youth of our nation for ſuch parts of the public ſervice, (in which a previous acquaintance with the ſciences was required) as their temper might diſpoſe, or their rank require, or their talents beſt qualify them to be ſerviceable. Hence ſuch a body of laws was given, ſuch a plan of inſtitution and diſcipline preſcribed us, as were thought the beſt, and moſt likely to anſwer the beneficial ends for which they were intended. Hence ſuch qualifications were required from thoſe, who were to ſuperintend this uſe-

ful work, as would beſt fit them to form the manners and to improve the underſtanding. That the eagerneſs and imprudence of youth might be reſtrained by the proper checks of authority; that their intellectual powers might be opened and enlarged by a regular progreſs through the uſeful and ornamental parts of knowledge; that they might ſee the foundation, on which the great duties of religion and morality ſtand ſupported; and have impreſſed on their minds an early and affecting ſenſe of the neceſſity of drawing out theſe principles into practice.

Whatever then is neceſſary to furniſh the underſtanding, made capable indeed of attaining knowledge, but unprovided with any of the materials that compoſe it; whatever is uſeful to direct it to the moſt worthy objects of its purſuit, ſo that the abilities God has given us may neither be proſtituted to mean purpoſes nor perverted to ill ones, becomes the proper ſubject of a liberal education.

The firſt foundations of knowledge are uſually laid, and perhaps laid ſureſt, in the ſtudy of the ancient languages. For we thereby gain acceſs to thoſe writings, that are the moſt valuable repoſitaries of good ſenſe, and the trueſt models of juſt compoſition: we thereby become acquainted with the maxims and opinions of thoſe ſages, who were moſt diſtinguiſhed for ſuperior probity

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and wiſdom; with the laws, manners, and uſages of thoſe ſtates, who ſtand firſt in the records of hiſtory for the juſt rules of policy by which they were governed, or the pitch of greatneſs to which they arrived.

Thoſe rules by which our reaſon is beſt directed in the purſuit and attainment of truth; in diſcerning the neareſt advances to it; in ſtripping ſophiſtry of its plauſible diſguiſes; in fixing the nature and degrees of evidence; in giving each kind of argument its due weight and force, are alſo of moſt admirable uſe in giving ſtrength and quickneſs to the mind, and in making it more ready and ſucceſsful in its enquiries.

We are then led to the ſtudy of thoſe laws, by which the material world is governed, and its ſeveral parts ſupported; not ſuch as are the devices of fancy or the concluſions of hypotheſis, but founded on clear experiment, and reduced to certain rules of calculation. And this affords an entertainment as uſeful and inſtructive, as it is curious and agreeable. For whether we take in a more enlarged and extenſive view of things, or confine our attention to the more minute examination of ſome leſſer part; we ſee in the one ſuch a compaſs of deſign, ſuch traces of inimitable ſkill in the other; in all ſuch inconteſtible characters of wiſdom and goodneſs, as can hardly fail of leading us up to the great framer and governor of the univerſe.

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But what is eſſentially neceſſary to the right exertion of our abilities, however in other reſpects cultivated and improved, is the aſſiſtance we receive from a due knowledge of morals and religion. Thoſe ſtrong bands of union, by which the ſeveral parts of this great community are held together; thoſe uſeful branches of ſcience, by our attention to which we can beſt promote our happineſs through the whole compaſs and duration of our being. The great principles of morality ariſe from the very frame and conſtitution of things; are founded in that connexion, which all rational creatures have with each other; and form that rule of conduct, which our ſocial affections diſpoſe us to obſerve, our reaſon approves as moſt excellent, and which is found moſt conducive to the great end of general happineſs.

But theſe are more fully illuſtrated and effectually enforced by religion; they receive a greater degree of clearneſs by its diſcoveries, and an additional weight from its ſanctions. The idea of a ſupreme Governour, who now directs, and will finally adjuſt the affairs of the univerſe with unerring wiſdom and impartial juſtice, is an inexhauſtible ſpring of ſatisfaction, the only ſteady prop and ſupport of virtue in all the various circumſtances, under which it may be placed.

Theſe great and eſſential points are to be explaned and eſtabliſhed with all that clearneſs and ſtrength of argument we are able to uſe; they are to be inculcated with

with all that care and aſſiduity which their great uſefulneſs deſerves. This is beſt done at an age, when impreſſions of every kind are the moſt vigorous and laſting: all young and tender minds, as it is a matter of ſuch weighty concern to all, ought to be poſſeſſed with a juſt ſenſe of their reaſonableneſs and obligations. For that perfect neutrality of opinion, which ſome are willing ſhould be kept to a more advanced age and greater maturity of judgement, is a viſionary ſcheme: equally improper and impracticable in our preſent condition of being, and contradicted by the general ſenſe and experience of all ages.

While we are conſidering one part of morals, the nature and end of that ſociety, which enjoys the appointment of equal laws and a ſettled authority: while we are explaning the uſe and advantages of government, we muſt certainly be ſenſible ourſelves, and endeavour to imprint on the minds of thoſe committed to our care, a juſt ſenſe of the many and great bleſſings derived upon us from that mild and equitable government, under which we live.

While we are aſcertaining the meaſures of civil obedience, or fixing the bounds of juſt liberty, we cannot fail of feeling ourſelves, nor ought we to fail of inculcating to them, the reaſonableneſs of that dutiful and affectionate obedience, which by every poſſible claim and ground of obligation are due to a King, who has ſhewn

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ſo tender and uniform a regard to the juſt liberties of his people. When we are ſending up our grateful acknowledgments to heaven for the invaluable bleſſing we enjoy of a pure and reformed religion, we cannot help reflecting, that the enjoyment of this bleſſing can only be perpetuated to us by the continuance, as it was effectually ſecured to us by the ſettlement of the crown in his royal and illuſtrious houſe. ——

Long protected by a race of kings, never more ſecure of protection than under the auſpicious reign of our preſent Sovereign: long ſupported and encouraged by the favour and munificence of the great, never ſurer of ſupport and encouragment than from the eſteem and authority of that great Magiſtrate who now preſides over us: Let us make the beſt return we are able, of duty and gratitude; and we cannot make a more acceptable return, or that may more reaſonably be expected from us, than by contributing that ſervice and aſſiſtance to the public good, which our ſituation requires from us; than by anſwering, in the beſt manner we can, the great ends of our inſtitution. This we ſhall beſt do by paying a ſtrict attention to the duties of this place, to the weighty province of education; that our youth, in whatever rank or character they are placed here, may be taught to preſerve ſuch a due regard to authority; may have deep impreſſed on their minds ſuch a ſenſe of religion and virtue; may be furniſhed with ſuch prin-

principles of knowledge, as may by their joint force and influence make them dutiful ſubjects to the King and uſeful members of the public; may diſpoſe and enable them to fill up the ſeveral ſtations, in which they may be appointed to act, in a proper and becoming manner.

This will be the beſt teſtimony we can give of our grateful regard to the dead, by exerting ourſelves faithfully to diſcharge what they ſo wiſely and piouſly deſigned. Thus ſhall we beſt and moſt effectually defeat the ill will of our adverſaries; thus ſhall we do moſt honour to the memory of our benefactors, by manifeſting the prudence and uſefulneſs of their appointments; thus ſhall we praiſe them in a manner the leaſt offenſive, becauſe not liable to any ſuſpicion of unfaithfulneſs, or imputation of flattery.

FINIS.